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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/553,150

12/22/2005

Jurgen Althammer

P/37-185

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OSTROLENK FABER GERB & SOFFEN  
1180 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS  
NEW YORK, NY 100368403

EXAMINER

KEE, FANNIE C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3679

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

06/14/2010

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/553,150	<b>Applicant(s)</b> ALTHAMMER, JURGEN	
	<b>Examiner</b> Fannie Kee	<b>Art Unit</b> 3679	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 May 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3 and 5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3 and 5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 29 May 2009 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                       | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114***

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/12/10 has been entered.

### ***Drawings***

2. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the first flange *fastened* to an end of the first pipe section and the second flange *fastened* to an end of the second pipe section must be shown or the features canceled from claim 1. No new matter should be entered.

3. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the second pipe section and its second flange section being *fastened* to the washing chamber must be shown or the feature canceled from claim 5. No new matter should be entered.

4. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet,

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even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either “Replacement Sheet” or “New Sheet” pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 1, 3, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Amended claims 1, 3, and 5 are directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: the original invention claimed a “coupling device” and Applicant has amended the claims to claim a “cleaning, disinfecting and drying plant”. How is a “plant” made up of first and second pipe sections? Since Applicant has

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received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits.

Examiner is assuming that Applicant is claiming the original invention of a coupling device and not a cleaning, disinfecting and drying plant. Applicant should amend the claims accordingly to reflect the original invention.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claims 1, 3, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Knapman et al Great Britain Application No. 1.223.846.

With regard to claim 1, and as seen in Figure 4, Knapman et al disclose a cleaning, disinfecting and drying plant comprising:

a first pipe section (section attached to 20);

a second pipe section (section attached to 3), the first pipe section and the second pipe sections being movable relative to each other; and

a coupling device coupling the first and second pipe sections, the coupling device including

a first flange (20) fastened to an end of the first pipe section and having an end face;

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a second flange (3) fastened to an end of the second pipe section so as to be mutually sealed with the first flange, the second flange including an end face facing the first flange, the end face of the second flange having an annular groove (12), the second flange further including at least one duct (17) leading to the annular groove and being operable to selectively provide a compressed air and or an underpressure to the annular groove; and

a sealing element (13) disposed within the annular groove, the sealing element being a sealing ring made of an elastic material, the sealing ring being pressed against the end face of the first flange when the compressed air is provided to the annular groove by the at least one duct, and the sealing ring being sucked into the annular groove when the underpressure is provided to the annular groove by the at least one duct (page 2, lines 37-42).

With regard to claim 3, and as seen in Figure 4, Knapman et al disclose the sealing ring (13) having a circular cross section.

With regard to claim 5, Knapman et al disclose a washing chamber and receiving trolley, the first pipe section and its first flange being fastened to the receiving trolley, the second pipe section with its second flange being fastened to the washing chamber, and the coupling device being disposed so as to couple the receiving trolley and the washing chamber (page 1, lines 21-25 and lines 30-36).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/35 USC § 103***

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

10. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Knapman et al.

With regard to claim 5, Knapman et al disclose a washing chamber and receiving trolley, the first pipe section and its first flange being fastened to the receiving trolley, the second pipe section with its second flange being fastened to the washing chamber, and the coupling device being disposed so as to couple the receiving trolley and the washing chamber (page 1, lines 21-25 and lines 30-36).

In the event Applicant does not agree that Knapman et al disclose a washing chamber and receiving trolley, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a washing chamber and a receiving trolley fastened to the first and second pipe sections because while anticipation requires the disclosure of each and every limitation of the claim at issue in a single prior art reference, it does not require such disclosure *in haec verba*. In re Bode, 550 F.2d 656, 660, 193 USPQ 12, 16 (CCPA 1977). In addition, it does not require that the prior art reference "teach" what the application at issue teaches. Kalman

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v. Kimberly-Clark Corp., 713 F.2d 760, 218 USPQ 781 (Fed. Cir. 1983). Finally, Applicant is reminded that during examination claim limitations are to be given their broadest reasonable reading. In re Zletz, 893 F.2d 319, 321, 13 USPQ2d 1320, 1322 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

### ***Response to Arguments***

11. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3, and 5 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

### ***Conclusion***

12. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Fannie Kee whose telephone number is (571) 272-1820. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571) 272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/AARON DUNWOODY/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3679

/F. K./  
Examiner, Art Unit 3679  
June 3, 2010